

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN- 7722 VICE 7721)

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SUBJ: CARDINAL DEFENDS CHURCH PEOPLE'S ACTIONS

REF: SANTIAGO 7604

1. SUMMARY: RIGHT-WING GOC ADVISER JAIME GUZMAN'S STATEMENT ON TELEVISION CRITICIZING CHURCH PEOPLE'S ROLE IN AIDING MOVEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR) FUGITIVES DREW VERY STRONG RESPONSE FROM CARDINAL, WHO THREATENED WITH EXCOMMUNICATION THOSE WHO TRY TO DESTROY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH. GUMAN MAY TAVE HAD IN MIND ATTEMPTING TO TURN CHURCH AGAINST CARDINAL. HE DID NOT, DISCLAIMED ANY SUCH INTENTION; AND BOTH CHIRCH AND GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID DIRECT CONFRONTATION. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING NOV 6 NEWS PROGRAM "60 MINUTES" ON GOVERNMENT'S NATIONAL TELEVISION NETWORK, RIGHT-WING IDEOLOGUE AND GOVERNMENT ADVISER JAIME GUZMAN GAVE CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF CHURCH PEOPLE'S ROLE IN AIDING FUGITIVES OF EXTREMIST MOVEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR). ANALYSIS WAS REPEATED ON SAME PROGRAM NOV 8.

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3. STATING HIS CATHOLIC CONSCIENCE OBLIGED HIM TO COM-

MENT, GUZMAN SAID FACT IS CHURCH PEOPLE WERE NOT ONLY OFFERING FUGITIVES HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE BUT ACTIVELY ASSISTING THEM IN ELUDING GOC SECURITY FORCES. HE SAID THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF "DIRECT AND VERY GRAVE CONNECTION BETWEEN AN IMPORTANT GROUP OF PRIESTS AND NUNS" AND MIR, WHICH FOLLOWS DOCTRINE ABSOLUTELY INCOMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIAN BELIEFS.

4. GUZMAN REFERRED TO PREVIOUS STATEMENT BY RAUL CARDINAL SILVA (SANTIAGO 7470) WHICH HE SAID HAD "CENSORED" CHURCH PEOPLE'S ACTIONS BUT HAD AT SAME TIME REMINDED ALL CHRISTIANS OF OBLIGATION TO AID THOSE IN NEED REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY. GUZMAN SAID THIS WAS CONTRARY TO LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDER'S EDICT 89, WHICH STATES THAT THOSE WHO GIVE ASSISTANCE TO FUGITIVES ARE VIOLATING THE LAW (SANTIAGO 7433). HE SAID THAT SACRED RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS SUCH AS CONFESSION OR FORGIVENESS WERE NOT AT ISSUE; THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND GIVING IMMEDIATE AID TO PERSON GRAVELY WOUNDED BUT THAT PERSON MUST THEN BE TURNED OVER TO AUTHORITIES IF A FUGITIVE; AND THAT CARDINAL WAS MISTAKEN IN STATING CHURCH PEOPLE'S ACTIONS ARE CORRECT UNDER CONCEPT OF MERCY. GUZMAN ENDED BY WARNING THAT TO ASSIST TERRORISTS WOULD ONLY LEAD TO MORE VICTIMS, AND SAID THAT FOR BOTH LEGAL AND HUMANITARIAN REASONS CITIZENS MUST OBEY GOC EDICT.

5. CARDINAL IMMEDIATELY DEMANDED NATIONAL TELEVISION DIRECTOR GIVE EQUAL TIME TO RESPOND. A SUMMARIZED RESPONSE WAS READ ON SAME TELEVISED NEWS PROGRAM NOV 11 AND PRESS CARRIED FULL STATEMENT NOV 12.

6. CARDINAL SAID GUZMAN'S STATEMENT DEMONSTRATED A NOTABLE MISUNDERSTANDING OF GOSPEL'S MESSAGE; GRAVELY DISTORTED THE THOUGHT AND NATURE OF CATHOLIC CHURCH; GRAVELY INJURED GOOD NAME AND MAJOR INTERESTS OF THE NATION; AND "CONSTITUTED A CRIMINAL SITUATION (IN CHURCH VIEW) EXPRESSLY ADDRESSED AND PUNISHABLE BY CURRENT CANON LAW." CARDINAL ACCUSED GUZMAN OF IMPLYING THAT HIS BISHOP (THE CARDINAL) DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.
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7. CARDINAL EXPLAINED CONCEPT OF MERCY AND POINTED OUT CONTINUAL RISK IT RUNS OF BEING MISINTERPRETED BY SOCIETY OR FOR PERSONAL BENEFIT. HE REMINDED PUBLIC THAT PRIESTS, NOW PORTRAYED AS CRIMINALS, HAD CONVINCED FUGITIVES TO RELINQUISH THEIR ARMS VOLUNTARILY; SOMETHING REPRESSIVE MEASURES WOULD NEVER HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

8. CARDINAL FLATLY REJECTED GUZMAN'S POINT THAT CONCEPT OF MERCY AND NEW GOC EDICT ARE OPPOSING CONCEPTS, AND ACCUSED GUZMAN OF DISTORTING HIS PREVIOUS STATEMENT. CARDINAL TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE NEED FOR RESPECTING LEGAL STANDARDS, INCLUDING CONCEPTS OF FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY DETENTION, INNOCENCE UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY, RIGHT TO ADEQUATE DEFENSE, AND EQUALITY UNDER LAW. HE LAMENTED THAT GUZMAN, A MEMBER OF GOC CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE, COULD SEEMINGLY IGNORE THESE AND OTHER CONCEPTS, AND PLAY ON PUBLIC FEAR BY WARNING THAT FUTURE ACTS AGAINST SOCIETY WOULD BE COMMITTED BY PERSONS LIKE MIR FUGITIVES, IF ALLOWED TO ESCAPE. CARDINAL ALSO POINTED OUT FALSE AND MALICIOUS STATEMENT THAT ASSISTANCE WAS GIVEN BY AN "IMPORTANT" GROUP OF CHURCH PEOPLE, WITH IMPLICATION THAT MORE THAN JUST A FEW WERE INVOLVED.

9. FINALLY, CARDINAL MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF EXCOMMUNICATION FOR THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO SPLIT CHURCH, AND DISCREDIT HIS AND CHURCH'S AUTHORITY.

10. PRESS NOV 13 CARRIED GENERALLY PLACATORY STATEMENT BY GUZMAN IN WHICH HE CLAIMED CARDINAL HAD MISUNDERSTOOD MEANING OF HIS ORIGINAL STATEMENT; SAID HE NEVER INTENDED TO INTERPRET CHURCH DOCTRINE; STATED HIS ONLY OBJECTIVE WAS TO POINT OUT DANGER TO HUMANITY IF TERRORISTS ARE PROTECTED; PREFERRED NOT TO RESPOND TO "VIOLENT PERSONAL ATTACK"; REITERATED HIS LOYALTY TO CHURCH; WARNED OF ELEMENTS ATTEMPTING TO DIVIDE CHURCH, AND STATED MODERATION WAS MORE NEEDED TODAY THAN EVER.

11. COMMENT: CARDINAL'S RESPONSE TO GUZMAN STATEMENT IS MOST OUTSPOKEN, TOUGH PUBLIC CHURCH STATEMENT SINCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEPTEMBER 1973 COUP. AS PREVIOUSLY NOTED, MANY IN GOC AND OF GUAMAN ILK RELISH CURRENT EMBARRASSMENT OF CHURCH HIERARCHY OVER MIR AFFAIR, BUT CARDINAL MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WOULD NOT ALLOW THEM TO IMPLY CHURCH AS A INSTITUTION WAS INVOLVED WITH MIR AS SUCH, OR TO QUESTION THESIS THAT CONCEPT OF MERCY UNDER WHICH CHURCH PEOPLE OFFERED ASSISTANCE IS NOT VALID.

12. GUZMAN IN HIS STATEMENT REFLECTED STRONG REACTION OF MANY CHILEANS AT WHAT THEY SEE AS CHURCH SYMPATHY FOR AND COMPLICITY WITH TERRORISTS. IT IS ALSO LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT GUZMAN HAD IN MIND ATTEMPTING TO DEEPEN SPLIT IN CHURCH HIERARCHY BETWEEN MORE LIBERAL BISHOPS AND THE CONSERVATIVES, WHO PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON COOPERATION WITH GOVERNMENT.

13. FLEEING MIRISTAS SOUGHT REFUGE WHERE THEY COULD FIND IT, BUT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN GLAD ALSO TO IMPLICATE CHURCH AND THEREBY ENCOURAGE A BREAK BETWEEN IT AND THE GOVERNMENT. IT THIS WAS THEIR THOUGHT, THEY FAILED. CARDINAL AND GOVERNMENT BOTH HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID CONFRONTATION. MOST NOTABLE WAS PINOCHET'S REMARK TO THE PRESS NOV 10: "THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS AN INSTITUTION WITH TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF EXISTENCE. SOME PEOPLE TRY TO BESMIRCH IT, BUT THESE TRIFLES DO NOT REACH THE CHURCH, BECAUSE IT IS MORE SOLID AND STRONGER THAN THOSE FEW DEVIATIONISTS."

14. CHURCH AND STATE NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO HAVE GREAT DIFFERENCES IN THEIR VIEWS OF BASIC PROBLEMS OF PRESENT CHILEAN SOCIETY.

15. PRESS NOV 14 CARRIED SHORT STATEMENT OF ARCHBISHOPRIC EXPRESSING APPRECIATION THAT GUAMAN HAD REITERATED HIS LOYALTY TO CHURCH, THUS CLOSING DIALOGUE. POPPER

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